

Resource Guide for Scouts and Parents

BSA Troop 614

Scotts Valley, California

Loma Prieta District

Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council

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Preface

This guide is written primarily for new Scouts and their parents; however, every scout and parent of Troop 614 should be familiar with its contents and should use this guide as reference whenever appropriate. These pages explain how a typical Scouts BSA troop operates, with additional information from the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council. The information comes from many sources including the *Scouts BSA Handbook* and *Scoutmaster Handbook*. Every Scout and their parents are encouraged to read this entire guide upon joining Troop 614, and to consult it as a reference guide as needed.

This guide will be revised as needed.

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Welcome from the Scoutmaster

On behalf of the entire Troop, I want to welcome you and your Scout to Scouts BSA!! We're glad you've chosen Troop 614 / 2614 and we want to make sure that your Scout has lots of fun and learn lots of Scout skills. This guide contains our policies and gives you some information that I hope will help you and your Scout make a smooth transition into the Troop. If you have any questions, please let me know. You can meet me at a Scout meeting, call me or contact by email.

Scoutmaster Philosophy

Our goal is to help Scouts develop the skills of **leadership** as they learn to be **responsible citizens**, all the while having fun and learning **camping skills** in the outdoors. We expect that as the Scouts learn, they will advance in rank. We hope that each girl and boy will set goals and that for many, that goal will be to earn the rank of **EAGLE**. Our job is to provide a safe environment where each Scout has the opportunity to reach their goal and to provide support and advice along the way.

The responsibilities of the Scouts are to try their best to live up to the Scout Oath and Law and to take the initiative in working toward their goals. The parents' role is to provide love and support, and the willingness to accept that the ultimate responsibility for achievement lies with the Scout. We try to work with each Scout as a unique individual; each has their own set of needs. If you perceive that your child needs a different type of support or motivation than we are giving, please come talk to us. We will do our best to meet each Scout's needs. However, no one Troop can be ideal for everyone. If your child is not enjoying our program and we can't change it, we encourage you to examine other Troops. We would rather see a Scout transfer and be happy than drop out of Scouting.

As Scoutmaster, I try to meet with each Scout in a Scoutmaster's Conference several times a year to find out how they are doing and what he needs to continue to have fun and advance. Scouts (and parents) do not have to wait for such a conference to talk to me or any adult leader. If there is something you want to tell me, either in public or private, let me know at any meeting and we will find a place to talk. Any of the Assistant Scoutmasters will also be happy to discuss any concerns you may have. Remember that we are here to help you and your Scout in any way we can.

Notes to Parents

Most girls and boys love the "outing" part of Scouting and approach new adventures enthusiastically. The troop's activities and events have been performed safely for decades. As scoutmasters and assistant scoutmasters, we carefully prepare the scouts for new situations, and they mature, learn, and gain confidence from those challenges. In the troop meetings prior to these events, scouts are introduced to and plan for the skills and equipment needed for the upcoming event. Additional training and support

during the campouts is provided by both adults and experienced scouts. The Scout Motto is “Be Prepared.” In Troop 614 we take it to heart and do our best to ensure every Scout is as prepared as the can be.

Sometimes parents, especially those new to Scouts, express their own fears, concerns, and insecurities when talking to their Scouts about up-coming events. How they express those concerns can strongly influence their Scout’s expectations and overall experience. It’s okay to have concerns and to voice them with your Scout. Please try to add a positive comment to it or a suggested remedy. This can make all the difference for your Scout. Some examples could be: prior to a winter camp out “It’s going to be so cold and wet, do you have the right gear and spare clothes?” or “I know you’ll be homesick at summer camp, but you’ll have plenty of merit badges to keep you busy and plenty of Scouts to keep you company. In then end I’m sure you’ll have a great time.” Your sons and daughters will be fine by keeping your words, tone, and facial expressions positive. Again, if you have concerns, please talk to me or any of the other adult leaders.

Troop 614 has historically been a relatively large and active troop. Like other organizations, the larger it is and the more activities it has, the more support the troop needs. The troop cannot function well without **active parental support**, which includes the following:

- Ensuring your scout attends and is prepared for Scout meetings, campouts, or other activities.
- Actively following your Scout's progress (or lack thereof) and encouraging your scout to advance.
- Being aware of the Troop program and annual calendar in Scoutbook.
- Attending Courts of Honor and other family activities.
- Supporting fundraising events, Eagle projects, and other activities.

Being a large and active troop has helped make Troop 614 very successful. It also means that there is always more that needs to be done. Adult leadership is needed at many levels, and there are many ways you can contribute, from being a member of the Troop Committee, a Merit Badge Counselor for the troop and/or council, an adult adviser for a youth leader, or a scoutmaster or assistant scoutmaster. I highly encourage you to read the section of this guidebook on Troop Organization and Leadership, and to contribute in any way that works for you. Most scout leaders have found that being actively involved is a great way to bond with their children, that adult scouting is highly enriching and satisfying, and that the more they put into it, the more they get out of it. Some of the adult scout leader training courses are world class and will significantly benefit your business and personal life in addition to honing your scouting skills. Try it – you might find you like it! Please see any adult leader or committee chair if you want to contribute. Don’t let the boys and girls have all the fun!

National BSA Policies

It is our intent that all policies of Troop 614 be consistent with the policies of the National BSA. If National policies should change so that any policies stated here are no longer consistent, we will, as soon as we know about them, attempt to conform to the National policy, even if a new edition of Troop 614 policies have not yet been distributed.

We appreciate input from all parents and committee members to help us improve and update these policies to provide the best possible experience for the Scouts of Troop 614.

Thank you, and welcome to the troop,

Tim Johnson and Alan Randolph

Scoutmaster's, Troop 614 and Troop 2614

The Purpose, Mission, Vision, Aims and Methods of Scouting

These items are sufficiently important that they deserve to be clearly stated herein:

Purpose

The purpose of the Scouts BSA – now Scouts BSA—incorporated on February 8, 1910, and chartered by Congress in 1916—is to provide an educational program for boys, girls and young adults to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop personal fitness.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Scouts BSA is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Vision Statement

The Scouts BSA is the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training.

Scouting will continue to:

- Offer young people responsible fun and adventure;
- Instill in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical character as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law;
- Train young people in citizenship, service, and leadership;
- Serve America's communities and families with its quality, values-based program.

Aims and Methods of the Scouting Program

The Scouting program has three specific objectives, commonly referred to as the "Aims of Scouting." They are character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness.

The methods by which the aims are achieved follow in random order to emphasize the equal importance of each:

Ideals

The ideals of Scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Scout motto, and the Scout slogan. The Boy Scout measures himself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and as he reaches for them, he has some control over what and who he becomes.

Patrols

The patrol method gives Scouts an experience in group living and participating citizenship. It places responsibility on young shoulders and teaches boys and girls how to accept it. The patrol method allows Scouts to interact in small groups where members can easily relate to each other. These small groups determine troop activities through elected representatives.

Outdoor Programs

Scouting is designed to take place outdoors. It is in the outdoor setting that Scouts share responsibilities and learn to live with one another. In the outdoors the skills and activities practiced at troop meetings come alive with purpose. Being close to nature helps Scouts gain an appreciation for the beauty of the world around us. The outdoors is the laboratory in which Scouts learn ecology and practice conservation of nature's resources.

Advancement

Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps in overcoming them through the advancement method. The Scout plans their advancement and progresses at their own pace as he meets each challenge. The Boy Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps him gain self-confidence. The steps



in the advancement system help a Boy Scout grow in self-reliance and in the ability to help others.

Associations with Adults

Youth learn a great deal by watching how adults conduct themselves. Scout leaders can be positive role models for the members of the troop. In many cases a Scoutmaster who is willing to listen to boys and girls, encourage them, and take a sincere interest in them can make a profound difference in their lives.

Personal Growth

As Scouts plan their activities and progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Boy Scouting. Children grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. Probably no device is as successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn.

Leadership Development

The Scouts BSA program encourages boys and girls to learn and practice leadership skills. Every Scout has the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps a boy accept the leadership role of others and guides him toward the citizenship aim of Scouting.

Uniform

The uniform makes the Scout troop visible as a force for good and creates a positive youth image in the community. Scouting is an action program, and wearing the uniform is an action that shows each Scout's commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting. The uniform gives the Scout identity in a world brotherhood of youth who believe in the same ideals. The uniform is practical attire for Scout activities and provides a way for Scouts to wear the badges that show what they have accomplished.

Joining Troop 614

Selecting a BSA Scout troop to join is an individual decision for each youth and their family. Every troop is different in the kinds of activities they schedule and in their personalities. You should choose the troop that you feel will best meet your needs. In selecting a troop, you should consider the following factors: Are the troop activities the kind that you would enjoy? How do the Scouts interact with each other? How do the older Scouts interact with the younger Scouts? Are there older Scouts active in the troop? (This indicates if the troop's program is exciting and interesting for a variety of ages.) Is the troop "youth led" or do the adults lead it? (The best answer is the troop is "youth led".) Are you comfortable with the adult leaders in the troop? Are the adult leaders trained, do they follow BSA policy, and do they welcome input and participation by all parents? In practice, the decision of which troop to join usually comes down to two factors: convenience of the weekly troop meetings (meeting night and location) and which troop a boy's and girl's friends are in.

Note that Troop 614 will try to accommodate and work with scouts with special needs – please consult with the scoutmaster if you have a special needs scout.

A Scout has the freedom to transfer to another troop if, for any reason, he / she changes her mind after joining a troop. When comparing troops, it is not too important how large a troop is, or how many Eagle Scouts it has, or how many high-adventure trips they go on. The measure of a successful troop is how well it meets the three aims of Scouting: encouraging participatory citizenship, building strong moral character, and helping youth to grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. In other words, do boys leave the troop a better person than they were when they joined?

A parent or guardian should accompany their child to a troop meeting when you decide to join Troop 614. One of the adult leaders will visit with you and your parents to explain Troop 614's program and procedures. You should receive the following materials and forms:

- Scouts BSA application
- Personal Health and Medical Record form
- Uniform Inspection sheet
- Troop Family Information Survey
- Adult application
- Access to Scoutbook with calendar and roster

At the next meeting you should return the completed Scout application, Personal Health and Medical Record form, along with the registration fee.

(If you don't have the *Scout Handbook*, see the section of this guide entitled "Books and Other Materials" to learn where to get one.)

Please also provide email addresses for the parents and the scout to the Scoutmaster, any assistant scoutmaster, or Troop Committee chair. Email is one of the primary

methods by which communications are sent to families. We understand and respect the need for privacy and take care to keep email addresses confidential.

Regular Troop Meetings

Troop meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month at the Saint Phillips Church from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We try and end all meetings promptly at 8:30 p.m., as we realize that both Scouts and adults have probably had a long day and may still need to do homework or chores after the meeting. Please make arrangements to be at the Church by 8:30 p.m. so that your Scout (and leaders) will not have to wait to leave. Weekly troop meetings are held year-round except during summer camp and during the Christmas season. Please check the Troop 614 calendar in Scoutbook for the meeting schedules, as some Wednesday's there will be no meeting, based on various national Holidays. the most current Troop calendar is always posted on the website at Scoutbook. Org. Siblings of Scouts are not invited to attend Troop meetings, unless they are boys of Scout age considering joining the Troop, or the meeting is designated as a family-invited event (such as a Court of Honor). But they are welcome as rare exceptions as needed.

Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) meetings are usually held on the third Wednesdays at the Boys and Girls club from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. All patrol leaders, assistant patrol leaders, and other junior leaders are strongly encouraged to attend; any interested troop member or parent is welcome to attend.

The Troop Committee meets at least once per month and the schedule is posted in the Scoutbook calendar.

We understand that scouts will not be able to make every meeting and every campout. Family, church, and school activities often conflict with troop activities. High school sports and band activities often demand an inordinate amount of time. But attendance is important. As the *BSA Scout Handbook* puts it, *"To gain full advantage of all that Scouting has to offer, you need to be present when things are happening. Take part in meetings, in planning activities, and in the fun of adventures. If you're there, you can do your part to make your patrol and troop a success."* - page 169. All scouts are appreciated whenever they can attend any event. Our Troop has historically been a very active troop. The strength of the troop depends on the attendance of its members. The troop activities fall into three primary areas of activities: Troop Meetings, Troop Outings, and Troop Service Projects. Being active in this troop means being active in all three of these important areas. It is not sufficient to attend only meetings---scouts that do quickly lose interest in the troop and leave. They also miss the "outing" part of scouting. It is not sufficient to attend only the outings---the meetings are used to teach important skills and allow the older scouts to teach and prepare the younger scouts for these activities. Likewise, the Troop Service Projects are where the second point of the Scout Oath, duty to others, is put into practice.

All ranks above Tenderfoot require the demonstration of Scout Spirit, of which an important part is participation with the Troop. The scout ranks of Star, Life and Eagle,

as well as Eagle Palms, require an active participation level for rank advancement. Furthermore, the second point of the Scout Law says that a Scout is loyal, and the demonstration of loyalty to your Troop and patrol requires that the Scout participate in their activities. Scouts who involve themselves in other scout activities outside the troop, such as Order of the Arrow Outings, scout summer camp counselor, den chief activities, cub scout crossover ceremony participation or other scout related activities may count those non-troop activities towards their overall participation level, but they do not replace being active in the Troop.

Sometimes scouts have trouble making activities because of conflicts with school, sports, medical, or other reasons. We have had several scouts who have had to take a break from scouting because of these conflicts. If a scout finds himself in this position, he should notify the Scoutmaster of the situation and when he will be able to participate again. A scout in this situation should realize that their advancement may slow down, but he will be advancing in another area (soccer, baseball, swimming, etc.). Although it should be obvious, a scout taking such a break should not hold a leadership position during this time.

Charter Organization

Troop 614 is sponsored by the Scotts Valley Lions Club and is open to all eligible boys and girls regardless of race, religion, national origin, or where they attend school.

Information Distribution

The most current information, announcements, and schedules for Troop 614 can be found at <https://www.scoutbook.com>

Important announcements will be emailed to the families from Scoutbook.

Dues, Fund Raising, and the Cost of Scouting

The ninth point of the Scout Law: *A Scout is Thrifty*

The Troop Committee recognizes that Scouting can be expensive and a strain on a household budget. *No Scout should be prevented from participating for financial reasons.* Financial assistance is available for any Scout who is unable to be fully involved in Scouts due to financial constraints. Please contact either the Committee Chairman or the Scoutmaster if you need financial assistance. Scouts must also demonstrate appropriate scout spirit and adhere to the Scout Oath and Law to receive financial assistance.

Scouts in Troop 614 are expected to participate in fund raising projects to defray the costs of scouting. This is keeping with the philosophy that a Scout is thrifty and should earn their own way in Scouting activities. The primary fundraiser currently used by Troop 614 is selling BSA Trail's End popcorn, camp cards and Christmas Wreaths.

In accordance with SVMB Council policy and suggested guidelines, revenues from the popcorn sales are divided as follows:

- 1/3 pays for the cost of the popcorn;
- 1/3 goes to the Council to help support Council activities; and
- 1/3 goes to the Troop.

The troop's policy has historically been to allocate 100% of its share of popcorn sales to individual scout accounts to pay for major Troop activities such as summer camp, some high adventure trips, and other similar events as approved by the Troop Committee. In other words, for every dollar of popcorn sold by a scout, \$0.33 can be used by the scout who sold it – based on a system that recognizes a scout's loyalty and service in raising equal funds for the Council. This should encourage scouts to sell popcorn as it directly benefits them!

Note that in many troops, the profits from popcorn sales go entirely to the Troop, or are split between the scout accounts and the troop. This policy is reviewed from time to time by the Troop Committee and may be changed in the future. Consideration may be given to allocating a portion of popcorn profits and/or sponsoring other fund raising activities to finance costs such as major repairs or equipment upgrades.

Many Troop activities involve expenses for meals and sometimes registration or camping fees. The troop collects an activity fee from each participating Scout and Scouter to cover the cost of the event and tries to keep it as reasonable as possible. In addition to the activity fee, each patrol establishes its own budget for food, and the patrol is responsible for collecting the money and purchasing its own food. Costs of summer camp and high adventure trips are paid in full by the Scout (although these costs may fully or partially come from balances in the scout accounts from popcorn sales as previously mentioned). Scouts are expected to earn and save for their Scouting expenses and not simply ask their parents to pay for it.

Uniforms

Your full Scout uniform (the "**Field Uniform**"), is to be worn while traveling to, traveling from, and during all Troop functions, Boards of Review (see page 25) and Scout sponsored activities. Uniforms can be purchased at Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council Store in San Jose.

"Experienced" uniforms can sometimes be obtained through a uniform exchange within the troop. The Troop Committee Chair or Quartermaster supervises the supply of experienced uniforms.

A full scout uniform, also known officially as the **Field Uniform** and more colloquially as a **Class A** uniform, consists of official BSA Scout pants (can be long or short pants) or an optional BSA skirt / pants for women; official BSA Scout shirt (long or short sleeve) complete with patches and green epaulets; Troop 614 neckerchief (see below); scout belt, and BSA scout socks. The short-sleeved shirt is more flexible than the long sleeved shirt, and long sleeve T-shirts or similar may be worn under the Scout shirt for added warmth. At a minimum – the Class A Uniform consist of the official khaki BSA shirt, troop 614 green and brown neckerchief and clean pants or shorts.

The troop doesn't require a scout hat, but if hats are worn, they must be scouting related. A merit badge sash is worn only on formal occasions such as Courts of Honor and *must* be worn over the left shoulder (never hanging from the belt). The *BSA Scout Handbook* provides some information regarding the placement of insignia on the uniform and for wearing the uniform, but no longer contains the complete rules. The full rules for the placement of patches can be found on the web at <http://www.scoutstuff.org/misc/isheets/>.

A well-prepared Scout should also have their Scout Handbook, a notebook, and pen or pencil at all functions. A scout should consider these items as part of the uniform.

For some outings or similar events involving a lot of physical activity, the scoutmaster or senior patrol leader may designate that a BSA T-shirt with the BSA insignia should be substituted for the Scout shirt. This is known as "the **activity uniform**" or also as a "**Class B**" uniform. Once the Troop arrives at a campsite, it may be acceptable and more practical to change out of your uniform and into clothing more suitable for outdoor activities. BSA t-shirts may be purchased at the Scout Store, or online.

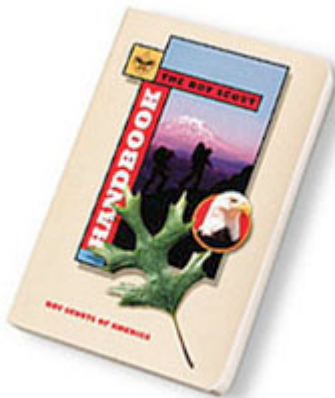
National BSA policy and its Congressional Charter forbid the imitation of military uniforms by scouts and scouters while participating in BSA activities. Wearing of camouflage items ("camo") when the class A or B uniform is not required and is discouraged. Wearing of camouflage items with the BSA uniform is not acceptable.

Note that for safety, sandals, flip flops, any open-toed or open heeled shoes, or bare feet are not allowed at meetings or on outings, except for specific aquatics activities where special permission is given in advance or as shower shoes at summer camp.

Troop 614 Neckerchief Policy

All registered Scouts are given a neckerchief unique to Troop 614 (brown and green) upon payment of their registration or transfer fee, usually at an appropriate ceremony as part of a Troop meeting, Court of Honor, or Blue and Gold Banquet (for Webelos bridging over to the Troop). The neckerchief is to be worn to all Troop meetings, campouts and events (unless specified otherwise) with the standard Scout Khaki shirt and rolled under the collar, or worn over the collar. The neckerchief is folded into a triangle so that both green and tan sides are showing. Once rolled, the green side is worn on the right.

Books and Other Materials



The first book that you will want to obtain is the current edition of the *BSA Scout Handbook*. It contains most of the information you will need to advance in rank along with important information about how a Scout troop functions, what you will need to be prepared to go camping and hiking. *Put your name prominently on and in your Handbook when you first obtain it.* Besides it being your guide, it is also a permanent record of your progress and as such, you do not want to lose or misplace it. **Bring your Handbook with you to every troop meeting and on every campout.** Start reading your *Handbook* right away. You should become familiar with its contents and you should stay aware of what you need to do next to advance in rank. The Handbook can be purchased at the Silicon

Valley Monterey Bay Council Scout Shop in San Jose. The Scout Shop also has canvas covers for the *Handbook*, which help protect it.

From time to time you will also need to purchase merit badge pamphlets. Each of the 100 plus merit badges has its own pamphlet that contains not only the requirements for the badge, but also much of the information you will need to complete the requirements.

Medical Forms

Everyone who goes camping with Troop 614 must have a Personal Health and Medical Record on file so that proper treatment can be made in the case of accident or injury. **You must have a medical form on file in advance, so plan ahead. There are three classes of medical records – read carefully to determine what is required in your situation:**

Part A and Part B are printed on the same form (Form 680-001). Part A/B is valid for any event that *does not exceed 72 consecutive hours* where the level of activity is similar to that normally expended at home or at school, and where medical care is readily available. Examples: day camp, day hike, swimming party, or a weekend camp. The Part B form is a Personal Health and Medical History. *A parent or guardian must update this section annually.* The Part A section covers the bottom front and top half of the back of Form 680-001.

Part C is needed for any event that *exceeds 72 consecutive hours*, where the level of activity is similar to that normally expended at home or at school, and where medical care is readily available. Examples: **summer camp**, tour camping, and hiking in relatively populated areas. Medical data required is *an annual health history signed by parents or guardian supported by a medical evaluation completed within the past 36*

months by a licensed health-care practitioner¹. The Part C form is designed primarily for Boy Scout summer camp but could be used for any Part C activity. Part C is a medical evaluation and requires a physical examination within the past 12 months and a doctor's signature.

The Part C Personal Health and Medical Record is required for any event involving strenuous activity such as backpacking, high altitude, extreme weather conditions, cold water, exposure, fatigue, athletic competition, adventure challenge, or remote conditions where readily available medical care cannot be assured. Examples: *high-adventure activities*, jamborees, Wood Badge, and extended backpacking trips in remote areas. Medical information required includes *current health history supported by a medical evaluation within the past 12 months performed and signed by a licensed health-care practitioner*. This form must be updated annually for all individuals planning to participate in high adventure trips or take Wood Badge training, regardless of age.

What this means is: When initially joining Scouts BSA, the scout needs a physical examination to participate in most camping activities or to go to summer camp. You need to fill in the personal medical history section on the Part A/B Medical Form and take it with you to the doctor for completion and signature. It needs to be updated yearly by the parent, but a physical examination by a medical professional is only required every 3 years. *However, all Scouts and adults* participating in high adventure activities, Jamborees, NOACs, etc., and adults over 40, must have a physical examination by a medical professional, evidenced on a signed Part C Medical Form, within the preceding 12 months.

Copies may also be obtained over the internet from <http://www.scouting.org/forms/>. *Completed forms should be turned in to the Scoutmaster or their designee.* Please keep several photocopies for yourself, as you may need to provide them for different events.

Outings



"Outing" is a major part of Scouting. Camping, hiking, canoeing, and all kinds of outdoor activities are an important means for achieving the three aims of Scouting. Outdoor activities are the central part of the fun of Scouting and are a major source of advancement opportunities. Troop 614 schedules some sort of outing every month of the year. We have fun outdoors regardless of what the weather conditions may be. We certainly

learn more and gain greater confidence when we are camping during "adverse" weather.

Scouts will advance faster, become more proficient in Scout skills, and enjoy Scouting more if they participate regularly in troop outings. A preliminary schedule of activities is published in the troop's calendar in Scoutbook. Adjustments may be made to some of the details, locations, and dates as the year progresses.

Your Senior Patrol Leader will determine the amount of the food fee, if any. Food costs are separate from the activity fee. Your food money should be given to your organizing adult leader. Food money should always be paid in cash to make shopping easier. Do not combine food money with your activity fee.

Note that if a Scout signs up for an outing and pays a deposit, that deposit is usually NOT refundable if they do not attend. Fees are calculated on a shared basis and dropping out or being a 'no-show' does not relieve the Scout of responsibility for their commitment.

Scouts are expected to travel to and from outings in your full activity uniform and to remain in uniform whenever we are in public. The Senior Patrol Leader (SPL) will inform the Scouts when there is an exception to this guideline.

Many of the troop's outings are in a wilderness setting. To preserve the wilderness experience and for safety, do not bring extra food or electronic devices such as games and cell phones, etc., on outings. If the Scout has their Cyberchip, they may use the device inside of vehicles while traveling to/from campouts but are not to be used during campouts.

Troop 614's policy is that parents do not go on troop outings. We do, however, always welcome adult guests. The difference is that when your Scout is on an outing, they are no longer your child but are part of a patrol and should follow the troop leadership hierarchy. If they have an issue and come to you for assistance, please ask them to take it to their patrol leader first. Doing so encourages them to learn leadership (and followership) skills and to learn to be independent. You'll get the amazing satisfaction of watching your Scout grow into the next generation of confident leaders.

Troop 614 Camping Policies

Camping Program



Overnight camping is a requirement for rank advancement. The camping program for Troop 614 is planned by the Troop and our annual planning meeting, at which time the themes and major activities are chosen for the new year. from September of that year through August of the following year.

Camping Permission

Troop 614 does not ask for separate permission slips for each campout or activity. The parent or guardian signature on the application form is taken as granting permission for all campouts and activities. If parents have a concern regarding a specific event, they are welcome to bring those concerns to either the Scoutmaster or the Troop Committee.

Patrol Gear

Patrol boxes and tents are currently managed by the Committee Chair. In the future we may create a Quartermaster Leadership Role (s) to manage the supplies. No Troop-owned gear is to go home with the Scouts. All cookware and utensils are to be cleaned on the campout to the satisfaction of the Troop Quartermaster.

Camping Drop-off / Pickup

Scouts should be at the designated meeting place on time. If the Troop is ready to leave and no prior arrangement has been made with the Scoutmaster to allow for a Scout to arrive late, the Troop will leave without them.

Scouts may not leave in the middle of any campout or event without the Scoutmaster's approval. This approval should be obtained prior to the campout. Scouts must also have

prior permission from the Scoutmaster to meet the Troop midway through an event if that is desired, so that appropriate arrangements by the Troop can be made.

No Scout may leave until he has permission from their Patrol Leader. Patrols may not begin to leave until the Patrol Leader has obtained permission from the Senior Patrol Leader. If a Scout needs to leave early, he must have the Scoutmaster's permission. If allowed, it may be with the provision that extra duties will be taken on by the Scout during the campout to make up for being unable to help unload / cleanup upon return. Since a scout is helpful, these duties should be taken and performed cheerfully.

Adult Leadership Requirements

From the *Guide to Safe Scouting*: Two registered adults², or one adult and a parent of a participating Scout, one of whom must be at least 21 years of age or older, are required for all trips or outings. There are only a few instances, such as patrol activities, when no adult leadership is required. Coed activities require male and female adult leaders, both of whom must be 21 years of age or older.

No fewer than four individuals (always with the minimum of two adults) are to go on any backcountry expedition or campout.

Troop 614's policy is to have at least one registered adult present for each 10 Scouts involved in an activity. At least two adults, at least one of whom is a registered Scouter, should be present with each "group" of Scouts during an event in which "groups" break up into different areas that are physically separated.

Registered parents, guardians and other interested adults who have taken Youth Protection Training may camp with the Troop with prior permission from the Scoutmaster on an occasional basis. Only those adults who are registered Scouters and have successfully completed BSA training in the prescribed sequence up to and including the BSA course "Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills" may camp with the Troop on a regular basis. Adults camping with the Troop will camp as an adult patrol (the Old Goats) and will not tent with the Scouts. The adults are also expected to set a good example and will abide by the same camping rules as the Scouts. They may not use unusual equipment not available to the Scouts, such as pop-up campers, heaters, or sleep in their cars, except in emergencies. Parents should let their sons carry out their scouting responsibilities on their own and should not perform the scouts tasks for them and should discourage the scouts from hanging around their parents or other adults when the scout should be with their patrols.

Smoking and Alcohol Policy

² A registered adult is one who has turned an adult volunteer application form with the applicable annual fee for registration with Troop 614, SCMBC and has completed online Youth Protection Training.

Scouts BSA policy is to discourage the use of drugs, including alcohol and tobacco. Thus, Troop 614 requires that no adult smoke in the obvious presence of the Scouts. No alcoholic beverages are allowed on any Scout trip, campout or activity.

Transportation

From the Guide to Safe Scouting: If you cannot provide two adults for each vehicle, the minimum required is one adult and two or more youth members - never one on one.

Seat belts are required for all occupants. The beds of trucks or trailers must never be used for carrying passengers. Drivers are requested to bring a mobile phone if they have one, and to share their phone numbers with the other drivers for directions and the parents of scouts on the outing in case of emergency. In accordance with BSA policy, drivers should NOT travel caravan-style in close proximity to each other. However, drivers often agree to meet at pre-determined stops along the way for meals or to re-group. Trips of greater than 300 miles each way require two drivers (one 'relief-driver') in each vehicle.

Tenting arrangements

From the Guide to Safe Scouting: Male and female leaders require separate sleeping facilities. Married couples may share the same quarters if appropriate facilities are available. Male and female youth participants will not share the same sleeping facility. When staying in tents, no youth will stay in the tent of an adult other than his or her parent or guardian.

Troop policy is that Scouts are expected to sleep in tents with members of their patrol. They may tent with other Scouts only with the permission of the Senior Patrol Leader and Scoutmaster. Scouts are expected to sleep two or three to a tent, depending on tent size, and may tent alone only when odd numbers exist that cannot be resolved given the available tenting. In Troop 614 a scout must be 14 or older and First Class rank or above to tent alone. Rare exceptions to this rule may be granted by the Scoutmaster for wilderness survival campouts or for OA members. Appropriate hammocks with a rain fly are acceptable under certain conditions but must be requested prior to the campout.

Health and Medical Issues

There are three primary issues with respect to health, developmental, and medical issues at a scouting activity:

1. Informing the Scouting Adult Leadership of health problems that have an impact on a Scout's participation.
2. Medication that must be taken by Scouts during campouts or events.
3. Special situations, such as diet or limitations of activity, which must be planned for in advance.

For each activity or campout, an adult (age 21 or higher) will be assigned the duty of Medic. This person has the following responsibilities:

1. To ensure that proper medical forms are in hand.
2. To collect medications and their instructions for their use from the parents of any Scout who requires medication during the activity and requests that an adult administers the medication to ensure that it is taken (as stated above, taking prescription medications is the responsibility of the individual and/or that individual's parent or guardian.) *To ensure that medicines are properly administered, the Troop requests that any parent requesting asking for adult assistance with their child's medication provide the necessary medication in a zip-lock bag(s) with the scout's name clearly marked in large letters, and containing clearly written or typed instructions for dosage, timing and other necessary instructions for each medication, along with written & signed authorization for administration by an adult leader. Written authorization is required for non-prescription medication. Prescription medications must be in their original packaging or containers.*
3. To ensure that an appropriate Troop First Aid kit is in hand.
4. To maintain a First Aid log to record any accidents that require treatment during the activity.
5. To receive from parent's information as to any special situations that require special treatment.
6. To have in hand a plan for emergency care for a critical injury or illness. This should include the name and location of the nearest medical facility to the site of the activity and may require additional consideration where aquatic, high adventure, or backcountry events are involved.

If a Scout is not healthy enough to participate fully in an activity, the Troop policy is that the Scout should remain at home to get well. Scouts with contagious diseases should not participate in Troop activities until a physician's note has been obtained indicating that the Scout poses no threat to other Scouts or Scouters.

See also the section of this guide entitled "Medical Forms" on page 14 for the medical forms and physical examination requirements for participating in scouting activities.

Webelos Scout Camping with the Troop

From the Guide to Safe Scouting: A Webelos Scout may participate in overnight den camping when supervised by his mother or father. If a parent cannot attend, arrangements must be made by the family for another youth's parent (but not the Webelos leader) or another adult relative or friend to be a substitute at the campout.

Troop policy is that second-year Webelos Scouts may camp with the Troop as part of their Den, both to complete the requirement for the Arrow of Light and to learn about the Troop as they anticipate moving up to Scouts. When they camp with the Troop, their Den is expected to have a minimum of two deep adult leadership, with the understanding that youth who do not have a parent along must have written permission

from a parent indicating that another adult will serve as the parental substitute. The Den Leader, Troop Scoutmaster, and ASMs serving in a Troop function may not be used as a substitute.

Personal Equipment Guidelines

Proper equipment and clothing are essential for safe and enjoyable outdoor activities. Some equipment is owned and maintained by the troop, including equipment that must be shared such as cooking equipment. Troop equipment is assigned to individual patrols. The patrols are responsible for the care of the equipment and bringing the appropriate equipment for each outing. The patrols work with the troop quartermaster when troop equipment needs servicing or replacing.

Each individual Scout is expected to provide their own personal equipment and clothing. A list of suggested equipment and clothing is found in your *Scouts BSA Handbook*. what doesn't.

Many items are available over the internet at less cost than you can find at local outfitters, at websites such www.rei.com, and/or www.backcountry.com However, some items need to be properly fitted, notably backpacks and hiking boots. For such items, local outfitters with trained staff are worth the possible extra costs for their knowledgeable advice and their fitting skills. We recommend Downworks in Santa Cruz for all back-packing supplies and REI for a wide selection of quality boots.

There is no need to buy everything at once – one can start with the critical items at first, and then put additional items on birthday and Christmas lists, and be well equipped over time. Popular myth holds that better quality gear costs a fortune. Quality brand-name gear can be found locally or over the internet at very reasonable prices if you are willing to be patient and sometimes shop out-of-season, i.e. buy winter gear in spring and summer gear in the fall. The markups are relatively high, so when items go on sale, the discounts can be relatively high also.

A final note: a Scout often must carry everything on their back, sometimes for a distance, so pay attention to what things weigh. Generally speaking, assuming equal quality, the lighter equipment costs a little more, but your Scout will thank you for it.

Troop 614 generally recommends that a Scout's first backpack be an external frame (pictured) or internal frame that is adjustable to accommodate the growth in the early years.

Internal frame packs are sometimes more comfortable, and may put the weight closer to the body, which is advantageous. Many manufacturers offer adjustable "youth" models. Do not buy a large backpack to "grow into". An ill-fitting backpack can cause a lot of discomfort and result in a miserable hiking experience. When trying on packs, make sure they are loaded with plenty of weight for a more realistic experience. **Sleeping system** In California, a 3-season, synthetic-insulated mummy bag rated at degrees is the most versatile bag to own. Down bags warm but are not a good choice for youth, as they do heat if they get wet. A fleece sleeping bag liner can also be used as a supplement for very cold weather and is nice to have for a lightweight sleeping bag by itself in the summer, as the fleece liner is adequate when the lowest temperature won't go below 50°F. A wool beanie hat may also be needed for very cold weather as most body heat is lost through the head. Get a stuff sack when purchasing the bag or use a trash can liner in the interim. A compression sack is nice to have but not required.



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A ground pad is an important part of a sleeping system. The pad is important for more than just comfort. The pad provides vital insulation between your body and the ground. A half-inch thick closed cell foam pad such as the Z-Rest is the least expensive (around \$20), lightest (about one pound), and most durable choice. Self-inflating insulating foam sleeping pads such as the Thermarest brand are more comfortable, a little heavier (around 3

Rain Gear Staying dry is critical to staying warm.

Raingear is an absolute necessity for camping and can serve double duty as an outer windproof layer. High-tech rain suits are available from many sources, and work very well, but are not a necessity. A Scout does not have to have an expensive rain suit and is likely to grow out of it. A durable poncho can be adequate and is much cheaper. Avoid buying the cheap plastic ponchos that are like garbage can liners because they will not last even a single campout. Rain gear should be taken on **all** campouts, as it often rains when we camp!

Foot Gear Most children wear athletic shoes everywhere: school, church, and during play. In good weather you may get by wearing them on a campout.



However, a waterproof hiking boot will stand up better to the rain, mud, and other conditions encountered on a campout and will protect your feet better than an ordinary athletic shoe. Under some weather conditions, an ordinary athletic shoe may be a serious health risk. Comfort is critical when hiking, so make sure they fit properly. Trying them on with thick socks is recommended.

Don't compromise the comfort and health of your feet by wearing cotton socks. Use synthetic liners under a medium-weight synthetic/wool sock whenever you are hiking or wearing boots. Synthetic blends that combine the best of polyester and wool into a single sock and other similar blends are a more expensive alternative, but they do a better job of keeping feet warm and comfortable under cold and wet conditions than pure wool socks. These synthetic blends are available over the internet or at most local outdoors stores. BSA now offers Class-A socks in a synthetic blend (made by Thorlo) that are excellent year-round socks, and they also comply with BSA uniform requirements.

Knives - Since inception, teaching Scouts how to use, handle, and store legally owned knives with the highest concern for safety and responsibility has been an integral part of Scouting. A sharp pocketknife with a can opener on it is an invaluable backcountry tool. **After** earning the Totin' Chip, a Scout is encouraged to keep one with them on all outings, and to keep it clean and sharp. Youth members are not allowed to carry sheath knives, which are heavy, awkward to carry, and unnecessary for most camp chores.

A suggested shopping list for personal equipment is included in Appendix G to this Guide, starting on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Advancement



Advancement is an important part of Scouting as a measure of the Scout's growth and progress. Each Scout keeps his own personal advancement record in their *Scout Handbook*, and should also record your service hours, campouts, troop activities, and

leadership positions in their *Handbook and online on Scoutbook*. The troop also keeps advancement records on each Scout. Your *Scout Handbook* identifies and explains all rank advancement requirements, so read it carefully. Information on merit badge requirements is found in the appropriate merit badge pamphlets, most of which are available in the troop library. See also the following section of this guidebook on merit badges.

When crossing over to Scouts from Cub Scouts, most scouts observe a significant difference in the standards for rank advancement. In Cub Scouts the standard was to "Do Your Best". Scouts are expected to complete the stated requirements exactly as written and satisfy the standards of each rank and merit badge. Sometimes you may find that you must work hard and grow beyond your current capabilities to obtain your goals.

Scouts should work on advancement with their parents, fellow Scouts, Scout leaders, and merit badge counselors. They should work on advancement on their own, in patrol meetings, during Troop meetings, and during other Troop functions such as campouts. Scout skills cannot be mastered by performing them just once. These skills should be practiced repeatedly, even after a skill has been "signed-off".

After you master a skill on your own or with your parents or in school, you must ask the appropriate Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster, or merit badge counselor to sign them off. Additionally, certain scouts who have achieved Star rank or higher have been approved to sign off rank advancements for scouts who are working on ranks below First Class.

From entering the Troop until earning their First Class, the Scout will be learning basic Scouting skills that will enable them to camp, hike, swim, cook, tie knots, administer first aid, and to work as a member of a team. Through First Class, the Scout begins to build themselves physically, mentally, and morally and to live with the Scout Oath and Law.. The rank of First Class shows that the Scout has mastered the fundamentals of Scouting and can begin to start leading others, refining basic scout skills, and learning more advanced skills. Parents should realize that this is a goal, not a requirement. Scouting has much to offer besides earning rank. Some Scouts take longer to earn First Class than others and they are still benefiting from the program. Scout leaders understand this and will work with each boy accordingly.

From the achievement of First Class through Eagle, the Scout will be demonstrating leadership, performing service projects, earning merit badges, and using the skills learned achieving the rank of First Class. The next ranks are Star and Life. These ranks are harder to obtain but are more interesting for the older Scouts. Upon completion of all the requirements for Star and Life, the Scout will be eligible to work for Eagle. The final steps towards Eagle are filled with leadership experiences.

Becoming an Eagle Scout carries special significance, not only in Scouting, but also in higher education, business, and community service. The award is a performance-based achievement whose standards have been well maintained over the years. Only about 4% of all Scouts who join complete the journey to Eagle.

A **Board of Review** is a requirement for each rank advancement. The Board consists of three to six registered members of the Troop Committee, but may not include assistant Scoutmasters, the Scoutmaster, or the scout's own parents. The scout needs to bring their *Scout Handbook* and be in full uniform to appear before a Board of Review. At the beginning of the review, the leader of the Board will bring the scout into the room and make introductions. The scout may be asked to stand before the Board and recite either the Scout Oath or Scout Law or other items that all Scouts are expected to know. Your uniform may be inspected for completeness and appropriate placement of patches. After this introduction you will be invited to be seated. Scouts will be encouraged to give constructive feedback to the Troop Committee on activities, improvement opportunities, and the Scouting experience in Troop 614. At the end of the review, the Scout will be asked to leave the room while the board confers. The board will then call the Scout back into the room to inform him either that they qualify for the next rank or what additional actions they must take to qualify. Scouts must truly earn their rank before it is awarded.

Following a successful Board of Review, the applicable new rank badges are awarded to the Scouts at the next possible troop meeting. Formal recognition of advancements and merit badges are made in front of family and friends during a ceremony at a **Court of Honor**.

Merit Badges



The Scouts BSA merit badge program is an excellent way for Scouts to learn important Scout skills in more depth and to explore many different careers and hobbies. It's not uncommon for a Scout to select a career or lifelong hobby from his experience with the merit badge program. The program also gives the Scout the opportunity to learn an important life skill: to make an appointment to work with someone they do not know.

Scouts may work on merit badges at any time, but they must have the merit badge blue card approved and signed by the Scoutmaster before working with a counselor. Merit badges are not required to advance through the ranks of Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class. Therefore, until a Scout has completed First Class, his time is better spent focusing on the requirements of the first three ranks rather than earning lots of merit badges. A certain number of merit badges must be earned for the ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle. A portion of those merit badges must come from the list of "required" merit badges. Required merit badges have a silver border and the others have a green border. Some merit badges may not be a good fit for very young scouts and should be deferred until the scout is older and better suited to meet the requirements, such as Personal Management.

Many merit badges can be earned at summer camp. In the spring, all of the Scouts going to summer camp will consult with the Scoutmaster and select which merit badges they wish to work on during camp. First-year Scouts should select no more than two or three merit badges. There will be a list of prerequisites for each merit badge. It is the Scout's responsibility to obtain the merit badge pamphlet, **read it**, and to complete the prerequisites prior to camp.

Additional information on merit badges and the current requirements for all merit badges can be found on the web at <http://usscouts.org/meritbadges.asp>

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Summer Camp

Summer camp is the highlight of the year for most Scouts. Every Scout should plan on attending summer camp. Being away from home, managing their daily schedules, and being immersed in scouting for a week all combines into an outstanding educational, healthy, and fun experience for the scouts that cannot be fully explained in words.

Troop 614 usually goes to a different summer camp each summer. Details of which camps have been selected by the youth and the week that the troop plans to attend are published in Scoutbook. Additional information, including handouts, will be provided in advance at troop meetings, that covers activities and merit badge opportunities, costs & timing of payments, what to bring, travel arrangements, emergency contacts, etc. Most scout camps have very informative websites, which usually can be found by performing a search on the internet. Frequently, the best section of their websites to find out details will be in the section for adult leaders, so reviewing those sections is encouraged for everyone.

Community Service

Boy Scout Slogan:
Do A Good Turn Daily

The Scout Oath includes the phrase:
... To help other people at all times; ...

Every Scout is expected to perform acts of charity and kindness and to develop a lifelong habit of community service and helpfulness towards his neighbor. Many Scouting awards and most of the ranks in Scouts have a requirement to perform a certain number of service hours. These service hours may be earned by giving your time to our charter organization, your community, or for a neighbor. For the purpose of rank advancement, Scouts may not count service hours performed to meet other community service requirements from their school and church. Note that the requirement states that service activities must be approved, so be sure to check with the Scoutmaster prior to starting your service to ensure that your activity will qualify.

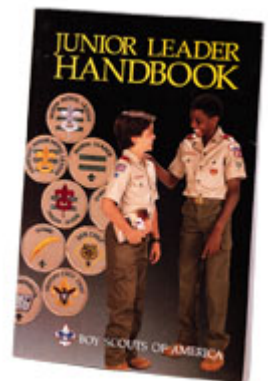
Scouts should seek out opportunities for performing community service and they should participate in the community service projects that are scheduled by the troop.

Troop Organization & Leadership

Scouts is a unique organization in that the Scouts are responsible for planning and running most of the activities. The adult volunteers are there to provide advice, leadership training, and administrative support. When a Scout has a question or concern about the troop, he should first go to the junior leadership rather than to the adult volunteers.

Patrols

As a member of Troop 614 you will be a member of a **patrol**. Within each patrol, the Scouts elect a **Patrol Leader** who then appoints the other positions within the patrol. Patrols tent, cook, clean up, and perform other activities as a unit, and learn to work as a team.



Senior Patrol Leader and other Troop Leadership Positions

The person in charge of the troop is the **Senior Patrol Leader** or **SPL**. He is elected to this office by all of the Scouts in the troop during a secret ballot. After consulting with the Scoutmaster, the Senior Patrol Leader appoints an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), and other troop leadership positions including Quartermaster, Scribe, Troop Historian, Librarian, Chaplain Aide, Bugler, Troop Guide(s). A Scout must be active in the Troop, be at least First Class in rank, and have been active in Scouting for at least 12 months in order to be nominated for Senior Patrol Leader.

Patrol Leaders' Council

All of the Patrol Leaders, along with the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader and the Troop Guides, make up the governing body of the troop called the **Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC)**, which is headed by the Senior Patrol Leader. The PLC conducts a troop program planning conference in June to plan and schedule the troop activities for the coming year. Patrol Leaders' Council meetings are usually held on the 3rd Wednesday each month from 7:00 to 8:30 PM at the Scotts Valley Boys and Girls Club.

Adult Volunteers

Scouting would not exist without adult volunteers. Adult volunteers can fill one or more of several roles. They may serve as a uniformed leader who works with the Scouts on a regular basis during weekly meetings and monthly outings, they may provide support for the troop through the troop committee, and/or they can help by being a merit badge counselor.

The adults who work directly with the Scouts are the Scoutmaster and the Assistant Scoutmasters. One of the most important jobs of the Scoutmaster corps is to train and guide the junior leaders in running THEIR troop. The scoutmasters should not run the troop, as this would deny the boys and girls opportunities to learn leadership, planning and organization skills. As scouts assume the various leadership positions within Troop 614, they can expect both formal leadership training and informal coaching from their Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmasters, the troop committee, and fellow junior leaders.

The troop committee performs three main functions: They serve as a board of directors that provides direction and guidance and establishes policies. They provide much financial, administrative and logistical support that makes the program planned by the Patrol Leaders' Council a reality and support advancement and other aspects of the scouting program. They also conduct the Boards of Review, an essential element of the Advancement process as covered in the Advancement section of this guide and in the *Scout Handbook*.

Since scouting could not exist without adult volunteers, we encourage all parents to consider contributing their time and expertise to the troop. You can contribute as little or as much as you like; there is no minimum, and all assistance is greatly appreciated.

Other Scouting Activities

Order of the Arrow:



The Order of the Arrow is a national brotherhood of Scout campers. The honor of becoming a member of the Order of the Arrow is one that scouts cannot set out to earn on their own. The members of the troop bestow this honor on you when you have proven yourself worthy of receiving it through active participation in troop activities. To be eligible for election into the Order of the Arrow, you must be an outstanding and unselfish camper, be at least First Class in rank, and have 15 days and nights of camping within the past two years including one week at summer camp. Elections for membership in the Order of the Arrow are held annually in the first quarter of the year.

Youth Leadership Training Conference (YLTC):

This is a weeklong junior leadership training course conducted by the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council. A Scout must be 13-years old and at least First Class in rank to attend. The course teaches advanced leadership skills and has a heavy emphasis on outdoors skills and the patrol method. Any Scout considering being a Senior Patrol Leader or Assistant Senior Patrol leader is expected to attend Council Youth Leadership Training. Anyone interested should inform the Scoutmaster.

Behavior, Conduct, Troop Rules

All members of Troop 614, both youth and adults, are expected to live their daily lives in accordance with the Scout Oath and the Scout Law. The Oath and Law embody the expectations of everyone's behavior and conduct.

When a Scout misbehaves, the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster in the absence of the Scoutmaster, will evaluate the situation, consider the circumstances, and then use his or her best judgment to make a decision that is fair and just. Youth leaders in the troop may act to put a stop to inappropriate or unsafe behavior, but they cannot administer discipline. Disciplinary actions and responses to misbehavior must never involve corporal punishment, denial of food, or belittling of a Scout. Multiple scouts will not be disciplined for the actions of one or more scouts, if they themselves aren't guilty of negative behavior that may warrant discipline.

Scouts who misbehave will be appropriately counseled in a scoutmaster conference by the Scoutmaster or an Assistant Scoutmaster in the absence of the Scoutmaster. Serious misconduct or multiple infractions may result in a period of troop suspension, as determined by the Scoutmaster and in consultation with the Committee Chair. Very serious misconduct may result in troop expulsion, in consultation between the Scoutmaster, Committee Chair, and Chartered Organization Representative.

One of the aims of the Scouts BSA is help young men and women develop strong moral character. Being a good parent, a good spouse, and an effective leader requires critical thinking and the ability to make sound judgments and ethical decisions. In an effort to serve as effective role models, the adults in Troop 614 will try to exercise these characteristics and not hide behind a long list of inflexible rules. Comprehensive by-laws, codes of conduct, and behavior consequence plans tend to preclude the application of common sense, fairness, and justice.

Religious Instruction

Troop 614 policy on religious instruction is consistent with BSA guidelines in that we do not endorse nor promote any one faith over another, and we are respectful of other faiths and to those who practice them. Although we regularly conduct a religious observance during campouts on Sunday morning, these are interfaith-based, without preference to any specific set of religious beliefs. BSA policy believes that specific religious instruction belongs in the family.

Hazing and Initiations

All Scouts, Scouters, and parents should know that hazing is forbidden by the Scouts BSA and will not be tolerated in Troop 614.

The BSA policy on hazing can be found in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, Chapter I - Youth Protection and Child Abuse:

All members of the BSA Scouts of America are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Law. Physical violence, hazing, bullying, theft, verbal insults, and drugs and alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership in the unit.

Appendix A

Frequently Asked Questions

Equipment: Does my child need to buy a backpack? A tent?

Our troop does participate in backpack style camping; therefore a backpack is required. The troop owns a number of backpacks that can be borrowed, or a parent may consider purchasing a back pack that specifically fits their child for best performance and comfort. A backpack is convenient because it keeps a scout's gear in one easily carried bundle. A tent is provided - boys and girls will tent two Scouts of the same gender and similar age in a tent. After a Scout reaches First Class, they may purchase their own tent.

Uniform questions: What is Class A? When does my child need to be in Class A?

The answer to this question is fully addressed in the Uniform section of this guide – see page 12.

Why does the troop always travel in Class A?

The uniform represents the positive influence Scouting has on our youth and creates a visible image in the community. By wearing his uniform, a Scout reaffirms his commitment to the aims and purposes of Scouting.

What are service hours?

Service hours are ways for the scout to give back to their community, church, or school. Scouts often help out in their church nursery, assist at the library, etc. Service hours are a requirement for advancement for certain ranks. See page 27 for additional information.

Do I just tell you what my child did for his service hours?

No. The scout should ask the Scoutmaster for approval of his proposed service before they perform it. When complete, the scout should update their record in Scoutbook and inform the Scoutmaster or give him a letter or similar documentation from the organization receiving the assistance for the Scoutmaster's review.

Monthly Outings

If my child is signed up and paid for a trip and gets sick at the last minute, do I get a refund?

In most cases, the answer is no. The reason is that the outing fee covers the cost of the campsite rental, equipment rental, etc. and these costs will still be incurred. Likewise, the quartermaster probably has already spent the food money for the patrol for the weekend. The exceptions would be if there was a per person charge for an activity and the minimum number of participants has been met such that the supplier is not charging for people not attending, or if someone attends in your son's place who had not previously planned to go.

Should I give my child's medication to a scoutmaster to administer?

The scout should take responsibility to administer his own medication. However, if there is a real concern about the effect of missed medication, an adult designated as the medic for the trip will be willing to monitor the administration of medication for your peace of mind. See page 19 for more information.

Why does my child always come home with a tent to dry?

Frequently, the tents are still damp from rain or dew when the troop packs up to leave. Tents and any other damp equipment should always be dried prior to storage so they won't mildew.

Why should the money for food for the weekend be in cash?

The parent of the patrol responsible for food doesn't want to have to go by the bank to deposit these checks before they go to the grocery store to buy the food. Please make it easy on them, as they are going out of their way for your child. You'll appreciate this practice when your child is responsible for shopping.

If there is money left over after the food is bought does it get returned to the boys and girls who went on the trip?

This is rarely an issue because the amount collected for each weekend is not that large. Nominal leftover funds are usually used to purchase extra supplies such as aluminum foil or paper plates for the next trip. Significant amounts would be refunded to the scout or parent in cash.

How do I contact my child in case I have to during a camping trip or other outing?

Cell phone numbers will be shared and communication's such as pick-up times, locations and changes in schedule will be sent via group text.

Merit Badges

How does my child get a blue card?

Your child should obtain a blue card from the designated adult leader, indicating the start date of the badge and obtaining the Scoutmaster signature **prior to working on a merit badge**. The answers to most questions on merit badges can be found in the Merit Badge section of this guide starting on page 25 and in the Appendix on the Merit Badge Process in Troop 614 starting on page 35.

Can I sign off on the requirements for a merit badge?

Unlike cub scouts, the parents do not sign off on requirements unless they are a registered merit badge counselor for the merit badge in question. In the latter case, work should always be done along with another scout.

Can my Child work on merit badges as a first year scout?

Yes. They will probably will work on merit badges at summer camp and possibly on merit badge programs sometimes held on weekends or at district and council events. However, outside of these events, his first priority should be to finish the rank requirements through First Class before focusing heavily on merit badges.

How do I know which partial merit badges my child has and what requirements he has left?

Your child is responsible for keeping up with his progress towards the next rank and on partial merit badges. In case of questions, your son should contact the applicable merit badge counselor.

How do we find out who the merit badge counselor is for a particular merit badge?

A list of the current merit badge counselors for the troop is maintained by the Committee Chair.

Rank Advancement

How do the requirements for the various ranks get signed off?

A scout must see a skill demonstrated, learn it, and demonstrate that he has mastered it. There troop guide, other approved experienced scouts, junior assistant scoutmaster, or an assistant scoutmaster will be happy to sign these requirements off for them. Please see the section of this guide on Advancement on page 23 for more details.

How do I request a Scoutmaster conference?

Scouts may request a scoutmaster conference by email or in person request at monthly meetings.

group, form a team, and master the basic scout skills.

Abbreviations

What is the PLC?

The PLC is the Patrol Leaders' Council. It consists of the Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, the Patrol Leaders of each patrol, and the Troop Guides, who each have a vote. They are responsible for planning and conducting the troop's activities. In addition, the other troop positions (Librarian, Historian, Scribe, Chaplain Aide, Instructor, Quartermaster, Assistant Patrol Leader, and Instructor) are also encouraged to attend. See the section on Troop Organization and Leadership on page 27 for more information.

What is a SMC?

SMC stands for Scoutmaster Conference. When a scout has completed the requirements for a rank he asks for a Scoutmaster Conference. This is a chance for the scout and Scoutmaster to get to know one another better. The Scoutmaster gets to review the scout's growth and work with him to set goals for future advancement. Also, he makes sure that the scout is ready for their Board of Review. See the section on Advancement on page 23 for more information.

Summer Camp

Will my child do merit badges at summer camp?

First year scouts will focus primarily on rank advancement at camp. However, their schedule will still allow them to work on merit badges.

Is it real important that my son go to summer camp?

Yes, especially for the first year because it offers an opportunity to bond with the other first year scouts and to advance in rank together. In addition, they will get to know the other scouts and scoutmasters in the troop better. Summer camp is usually the premier scouting event of the year. Being away from home, managing their daily schedules, and being immersed in scouting for a week all combines into an outstanding educational, healthy, and fun experience for the scouts that cannot be fully explained in words. Every Scout is strongly encouraged to attend summer camp. In subsequent years, summer camp attendance allows older scouts to take up leadership roles, experience new activities (often fun, high-adventure activities), and continue merit badge classes. Summer camp also allows an opportunity to acquire several merit badges in a short period of time, which helps the scout to progress through the various ranks. Please see the section on Summer Camp on page 26.

parents may increase their homesickness and make the rest of the week harder.

Why don't you want my child to call me while he's away at camp?

Summer camp is a time for your son to grow independent and expected phone calls would diminish this opportunity for growth. In addition, most camps have very few public phones and several hundred boys wanting to use it. During the free time that the scouts have it would be impossible for all of them to use the phone. Calls for emergency purposes are always allowed.

High Adventure

What are these High Adventure outings that I hear about?

The High Adventure outings are ones that are directed at youth at least 13 years old. They are usually more physically challenging than the normal monthly outing. The addition of these activities help the older boys and girls stay interested in scouting and stay with the troop as role models and leaders.

My son or daughter is mature for his / her age and wants to go on these High Adventure outings. Why is there an age limit and can it be waived?

Due to the nature and established purpose of these trips, age limits are established and will be adhered to. Most of the minimum age limits for various activities are set by national BSA policy. Your child's chance to attend will come.

Appendix B

Scouting-related links on the Web

Note: Troop 614 does not endorse any of the following websites. They are included for your convenience.

- BSA National Council at www.scouting.org
- Merit badge information at <http://meritbadge.com/>.
- The *Guide to Safe Scouting* can be found at <http://www.scouting.org/pubs/gss/>; note that this publication is usually updated several times a year, and that the updates are described in an appendix.
- EagleScout.Org is dedicated to helping Scouts become Eagle Scouts at <http://www.eaglescout.org/>
- Just about everything you could want to know about scouting can be found at the [U.S. Scouting Service Project \(USSSP\)](http://www.usscouts.org/) at <http://www.usscouts.org/>
- Animated Knots at <http://www.mistral.co.uk/42brghtn/knots/42ktmenu.html>
- [Outdoor Action Guide to Winter Camping](http://www.princeton.edu/~oa/winter/wintcamp.shtml) at <http://www.princeton.edu/~oa/winter/wintcamp.shtml>
- Order of the Arrow at <http://www.oa-bsa.org/>

Appendix C

Merit Badge Process for Troop 614

Merit Badges are an important part of Scouting. Not only are some required for advancement beyond First Class, but many teach skills that can be valuable years into the future, such as Lifesaving and Personal Management. Even the optional ones are important, as many former Scouts attribute their interest in their current career or their hobbies to an introduction to a subject by a dedicated Merit Badge Counselor. Thus, it's important for everyone to understand just what the process is for a Scout to earn a Merit Badge. This appendix describes some of the details of how a Scout goes about earning a Merit Badge.

There are generally two forums in which Merit Badges may be taught by a local counselor associated with the Troop or District or at Summer Camp. There are some minor differences, mostly because some camps don't have the same "paper trail", but the process should go as follows:

Step 1: The Scout decides on a badge they would like to work on and approaches the Scoutmaster about it.

Step 2: The Scoutmaster decides if this is an appropriate badge for the young man, finds out who the appropriate Counselor is, and makes sure the Scout knows that he must have at least one more Scout sign up with him so that the Scout and Counselor are never working one-on-one, alone. In some rare cases, a sibling or friend might substitute for another Scout in the meeting with a counselor. (Note: Troop 614's policy is

that if the Scout's parent is the appropriate Counselor, we REQUIRE that at least one other Scout be involved, so that the badge is taught as a class and we avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.)

Step 3: The Scout fills out a "blue card" and gets it signed by the Scoutmaster. This card is the Scout's permission slip to begin to work and no Counselor should begin to help a Scout with a badge until he/she is presented with a blue card signed by the Scoutmaster. The reason for this is that some badges require other badges as a prerequisite (Swimming must be earned before starting Lifesaving, for example), some Scouts try to sign up for too many badges at once, and other badges are most appropriate for older Scouts (Personal Management and Family Life, for example, for when the Scout is more likely to have an income and is better able to appreciate the topics addressed). The Scoutmaster makes a note in a Troop Merit Badge Notebook that the Scout has started a badge. This helps the Scoutmaster know whether a Scout has, for example, begun 6 badges in the last year, all of which are still "in progress", or whether the Scout needs a particular badge to get to that next rank. He can then counsel the Scout as necessary to help him be efficient and stay on track.

Step 4: The Scouts take their signed blue cards and give them to the Counselor, who holds on to them and fills them out as the Scouts complete their requirements. We recommend that the Scout purchase the latest edition of the appropriate merit badge pamphlet and use this not only as a guide, but also as a way of keeping track of which requirements he has finished and which he has left to do (requirements are also available on-line at <http://www.meritbadge.com/>). The Scout should be keeping track of what they have done, but if a Scout has any questions, they should approach the Counselor to verify his achievements.

Step 5: When the badge is complete, the Counselor signs the card, and tears off his/her third of the card to keep as a record. The Counselor then turns in the other two thirds to the Scoutmaster, who signs the card and gives one third to the Scout and keeps the last third to use to write the information on a Troop Advancement Report. This final portion of the blue card goes into a file in the Scoutmaster's office, and the Scoutmaster also makes a note in a Troop Merit Badge notebook that the badge is complete.

Step 6: The Troop Awards Chairperson takes the report to the Council office, gets the badge, fills out the accompanying recognition card, and returns the badge and card to the Scoutmaster while giving a copy of the Advancement Report to the Troop Advancement Chair.

Step 7: The Scout is presented the badge at the next opportunity, usually a Troop meeting, while the card is saved to be given at the next Court of Honor to recognize the Scout's achievement.

Remember that this is **her/his** badge to earn; while it is fine for you to help them pick fun merit badges, identify resources, and make it to meetings, it is their job to do their own research, keep track of activities, do exercises and write reports. If they struggle with these, encourage them as best you can and by all means let us know so we can encourage them, too. But the work remains the Scout's responsibility. This way, they learn to take initiative to complete a project, and will feel that **they** have really accomplished something when receiving that badge. And it's this ability to take a project to completion that will put them ahead on the "Trail to Eagle."